



2023 POLICY PRIORITIES

First 5 Association of California (F5AC) advocates for California's youngest children and their families to ensure that they have the supports to thrive in school and life. Grounded in a whole child / whole family framework with an intentional focus on Prenatal-to-3, First 5 is a conduit for change during this critical stage of development - building comprehensive and integrated early childhood systems of care that advance equity, prevention strategies and systems coordination.

F5AC works to advance state and federal policies that support the First 5 network and infrastructure and cultivate opportunity for all of California's young children and families. We do this while centering the fact that low-income communities, communities of color, and historically marginalized Californians face disproportionate impacts due to systemic racism, wealth inequality, and natural disasters.

Resilient Families

- Ensure California families have access to relevant and effective supports in a timely manner, building upon state and local systems that provide culturally- and linguistically-appropriate services
- Increase family economic supports, so that families can provide stable, thriving homes in which to raise children.

Comprehensive Health and Development

- Support investments to advance prevention, care coordination, screenings, and multi-generational supports through Medi-Cal.
- Strengthen the systems of early identification and referral to appropriate intervention services for young children.
- Seek to eliminate racial inequities in maternal and infant health outcomes, including through removing systemic barriers to care for people of color, eliminating systemically racist practices, and increasing culturally relevant services for birthing people.
- Increase access to community-based Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) programs that effectively prevent and respond to trauma, promote resilience, and identify concerns early.
- Secure increased investments in the IECMH workforce to create a robust network of trained providers

Quality Early Learning

- Stabilize, strengthen, and scale early care and learning opportunities, with a focus on infant and toddler care.
- Promote equitable access and affordability across the mixed delivery system – system strengthening, workforce and quality improvement support to promote nurturing relationships between providers, caregivers, and children.

Sustainability and Scale

- Secure \$100 million one-time General Fund allocation to offset the impact of Proposition 31 flavored tobacco ban and declining tobacco tax revenue. Proposition 31 was supported by First 5 as a critical advancement in smoking cessation and overall public health. At the same time, the passage of Proposition 31 will destabilize First 5's infrastructure and service provision for early childhood health, learning, and prevention strategies throughout the state.
- Ensure that local First 5 commissions are recognized and engaged by the state as foundational community implementers, intermediaries, fiscal agents and thought partners for programs, policies, and state initiatives that seek to improve child and family outcomes.
- Preserve First 5 funding as fiscal projections for the State begin to decline.
- Preserve recent California policy achievements and state investments that will improve outcomes for young children (e.g., continuous eligibility for Medi-Cal from birth through age 5, investments in home visiting or child care).